Global Monitoring Report, 2007

1343. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UNESCO has apologized and agreed to correct a paragraph in the Global Monitoring Report, 2007, which claims that children below 15 years in the country are involved in armed conflicts; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) A map entitled "Children and armed conflict, 2003" at page 75 of the EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2007 indicates India to be a State in Armed Conflict in 2003 with more than 1/3rd of population under 15 years of age. It also indicates that India is a country with child fighters under 15 years of age. The source of the information contained in the map is stated to be Project Ploughshares (2003).

The matter was taken up with UNESCO at the highest level. A clarification has been received from UNESCO stating that definitions of armed conflict vary and that there is no one authoritative list of countries in conflict. It is further stated that the report of the Project Ploughshares includes in the list of countries in armed conflict those countries in which the reported death toll has crossed 1000. UNESCO has further stated that they understand that armed conflict is not a reality in the whole of India. A Note has now been added to GMR 2007 to clarify this fact.

World Bank report on education

1344. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent World Bank Report saying India is the best of the world and it is the worst of the world, meaning thereby that gaps are growing-India's top technology colleges setting global standards, yet many of the children finishing Government primary schools, being incapable of simple arithmetic; and